

## BOOK REVIEW

KARSTEN H.K. WODRICH. 1997. **Growing South African Indigenous Orchids.** (ISBN 90-5410-650-6, hbk.). Rotterdam (in USA: A.A. Balkema Publishers, Old Post Road, Brookfield, VT 05036-9704, U.S.A (Fax 802-276-3837, e-mail info@ashgate.com, <http://www.balkema.nl>) \$85.00 hbk., 253 pp., 94 color and 109 b&w photos and drawings.

This beautifully illustrated volume is a self-contained monograph on how to grow South African orchids, from summarizing the habitats in which the orchids are found to providing plans for setting up a tissue culture lab at home. Although, the focus is on species native South Africa, much of the general discussion can be applied to the culture of any orchids. Early in the book, the discussion moves from general aspects of growing orchids to the various habitats and climates in South Africa. Next is a general discussion of design of culture space around one's home, orchid physiology and nutrient requirements, and orchid pests and diseases. The next chapter looks at the three major growth forms of orchids and the horticultural requirements common to each. Within the treatment of the respective growth habits, each genus and species is broken out for specific instruction on natural occurrence and horticultural needs. Most species are illustrated with a color photograph of its inflorescence or individual flower. There are sections on orchid breeding and propagation using culture media both with and without fungal symbionts. Step-by-step photos and recipes guide the novice through sterile culture methods using only kitchen equipment and a pH meter. An appendix even includes designs for building one's own sterile seeding box and a laminar-flow hood. The author does not forget conservation issues and includes copies of conservation legislation. The book is so complete and well-designed that I found only one negative point: the inks contain a volatile compound that has the odor of overly ripe guavas. This book is a must-buy for orchid enthusiasts everywhere and would make a worthwhile addition to any horticulturist's library.—*Roger W. Sanders, Associate Collections Manager, Botanical Research Institute of Texas.*